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LETTER DATED 11 JANUARY 1991 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF
THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS TO THE UNITED NATIONS
ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to enclose the text of a statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on 10 January 1991.

I should be grateful if you would have the letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Y. VORONTSOV

Annex

Statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Union
of Soviet Socialist Republics on 10 January 1991

A meeting took place yesterday in Geneva between the Secretary of State of the United States of America, James Baker, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq, Tariq Aziz. To judge from the reports that have been issued, it yielded no positive results.

This outcome of the meeting is profoundly regrettable, since the conduct of a direct United States-Iraqi dialogue offered some hope that the acute crisis in the Persian Gulf could be overcome on the basis of the Security Council resolutions and the clearly expressed will of the world community.

From the very outset of the crisis in the Gulf, the Soviet Union has sought to do everything possible to avoid the outbreak of large-scale armed conflict in the region and to channel the course of events towards a political settlement. Among the steps we have taken just recently were the talks in Baghdad with Saddam Hussein and other Iraqi leaders by the Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, Igor Belousov, and a group of people's deputies from the Soviet Union, and matching contacts with the United States side. On 8 January, the Soviet Ambassador in Baghdad transmitted to President Saddam Hussein a further appeal by the Soviet leadership, addressing the situation in the Persian Gulf region and the United States-Iraqi meeting, and aimed at facilitating the creation at the Geneva talks of an atmosphere of search for a political solution.

The "pause of goodwill" comes to an end on 15 January. The Soviet Union is convinced that the most energetic political and diplomatic efforts should be made to bring the Persian Gulf region back from the brink of an armed conflict which would have the most destructive consequences for the peoples living there, and in the first place for the people of Iraq.

We welcome the mission the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, intends to undertake to Baghdad, and we appeal to all parties, and especially to Iraq, to recognize the full seriousness of the moment and to demonstrate the sense of responsibility for the fate of the region and the fate of its peoples which is so vitally needed in this situation.
